

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SY-10 USSS-00 OC-06 CCO-00 OPR-02

PER-05 A-01 SIL-01 LAB-06 FBO-01 DRC-01 /155 W

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R 261630Z FEB 74

FM AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2625

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMCONSUL TANGIER

USINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L CASABLANCA 0172

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MO

SUBJECT: CASABLANCA WAITS FOR THRONE DAY

1. SUMMARY: CASABLANCA, PREPARING FOR MARCH 3 THRONE DAY, HAS CASE OF JITTERS BUT WE HAVE NO REAL INDICATIONS OF IMPENDING TROUBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. AS ELSEWHERE IN MOROCCO, LOCAL RUMOR MILL HAS BEEN PRODUCING AT FURIOUS PACE IN RECENT WEEKS BUT WE HAVE LITTLE HARD INFORMATION. THIS LEADS US TO DISCOUNT MOST REPORTS OF ARMS DELIVERIES, TERRORIST CELLS AND ATTEMPTS ON KING'S LIFE. VERY EXISTENCE THESE RUMORS HAS, HOWEVER, CREATED PALPABLE NERVOUSNESS AND SENSE OF EXPECTATION HERE AS THRONE DAY APPROACHES.

3. OPPOSITION AND TRADE UNION LEADERS IN CASABLANCA HEAR SAME RUMORS WE DO AND NOT MANY MORE FACTS. THEY CITE RECENT SECURITY MEASURES AT RABAT RADIO-TELEVISION CENTER AND APPARENT EXPLOSION BOMB IN CASABLANCA MEDINA AS INDICATIONS
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THAT ALL FAR FROM WELL. ALTHOUGH THEY UNANIMOUSLY EXPECT

MORE ATTEMPTS AT COUPS BY MILITARY, THEY DO NOT BELIEVE ONE MORE LIKELY NOW WHEN REGIME'S GUARD UP THAN NEXT MONTH OR NEXT YEAR. AS FOR FOREIGN-INSPIRED TERRORISM THEY DO NOT APPEAR TO KNOW MUCH MORE THAN WE. OCCUPIED WITH THEIR OWN ROUTINE ACTIVITIES, AND UNWILLING TO SEE THE KING REMOVED FROM THE SCENE, THEY ARE DEFINITELY CAST IN ROLE OF POLITICAL SPECTATORS THESE DAYS.

4. GOM HAS TAKEN NUMEROUS VISIBLE SECURITY MEASURES SUCH AS VERY INTENSE ROADBLOCKS, STRENGTHENED SECURITY FORCES WATCHING LYCEES AND INCREASED POLICE PRESENCE IN TOWN. IN ADDITION THERE ARE NEW REPORTS OF MASSIVE ARRESTS OF SUSPECTED TROUBLE MAKERS AND A NEW REPORT THAT POLICE WILL BE ON STATE OF ALERT BEGINNING FEBRUARY 27.

4. PUBLIC NERVOUSNESS AS THRONE DAY APPROACHES AND HIGHLY VISIBLE SECURITY MEASURES ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING. THE MORE UNEASINESS AUTHORITIES PERCEIVE THE TIGHTER THE SECURITY WHICH IN TURN GENERATES MORE JITTERS AND RUMORS. ALTHOUGH ADMITTEDLY SPECULATION ON OUR PART, WE BELIEVE TIGHT GOM SECURITY AS MUCH OUT OF SIMPLE PRUDENCE AND PREPAREDNESS AS OUT OF FACT-BASED EXPECTATION IMPENDING TROUBLE. AFTER ALL, TROUBLE-FREE THRONE DAY WILL BE SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE FOR KING.
BRUBECK

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